

500-502 South Convent Avenue
Tucson
Barrio Libre (Barrio Histórico)
Tucson
Pima County
Arizona

HABS No. AZ-73-12

HABS,
ARIZ,
10-TUCSO,
30/12 -

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

BARRIO LIBRE (Barrio Histórico)

500-502 SOUTH CONVENT AVENUE

HABS No. AZ-73-12

Location: 500-502 S. Convent Avenue, Tucson, Pima County, Arizona.

USGS Tucson Quadrangle, Universal Transverse
Mercator Coordinates: 12.502680 .3563970

Present Owners: David E. and Amber Joy Jácome
Pearry L. and Evelyn J. Green
496-498 S. Convent Ave.
Tucson, Arizona 85701

Present Occupant: Vacant.

Present Use: Residential; duplex.

Significance: This Late Transitional Sonoran adobe building stands out from its earlier flush-fronted rowhouse neighbors to the north. Its set back and isolated situation, hipped roof with gablets, and porch with turned posts establish its Anglo character in contrast to the adjacent Sonoran adobes to the north. The residence was built by a local carpenter, Francisco Valenzuela.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1911.
2. Architect: None known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: See chain of title below.

Part of Lot 5, Block 241, parcel 27.

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|------|--|
| 1907 | Deed, February 21, 1907, recorded in Volume 42, page 125.
Julia Zeckendorf to Albert Steinfeld. |
| 1912 | Deed, March 14, 1912, recorded in Volume 53, page 206.
Albert and Bettina Steinfeld to Trinidad Barcía. |
| 1974 | Deed, January 22, 1974, recorded in Volume 4687, page 472.
D. M. García to E. J. Abodeely. |
| 1979 | Deed, October 9, 1979, recorded in Volume 6129, page 341.
Bertoglio to Jácome. |

4. Builder: Francisco Valenzuela. Valenzuela was a local carpenter who lived on W. Kennedy St., between S. Main and S. Meyer avenues.
5. Alterations and additions: This structure was built originally as a duplex and has had no additions. A small adobe and frame garage in the rear yard has been demolished since 1948.

B. Historical Context:

This house was built for the García family of 496-498 S. Convent Ave. by a local carpenter named Francisco Valenzuela. The Garcías rented the duplex to a number of tenants, most of whom were Southern Pacific Railroad employees, until they sold the property in 1974. The property is now owned by David Jácome, a descendant of the family who started Jácome's Department Store, one of the first and largest department stores in Tucson.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This building is an example of the Late Transitional phase of Tucson architecture. It is built of the traditional adobe material but displays Anglo planning concepts, with the building isolated on its site, and Anglo building form with its hip roof and front porch.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is boarded up at this time. There has been a fire at the rear of the house. While the walls appear to be structurally sound, there has been some deterioration, and the roof has holes, opening the interior to potential for further deterioration.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The house measures 31'-2" north-to-south along its east front and 41'-10" along its north wall. In addition there is a 6'-1"-deep porch along the east front.
2. Foundations: There is a rock foundation. It is the variety of volcanic rock quarried at Sentinel Peak (known locally as "A" Mountain) west of the city.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The walls are of 1'-0"-thick mud adobe with stucco painted white.
4. Structural system, framing: The adobe bearing walls support a lightweight truss system. The wood floor joists are carried on the foundation walls and provide for a crawl space.

5. Porches, stoops: The house has an open porch on the east front which extends the full width of the building. The roof of the porch is an extension of the front hip roof slope and is finished at either end with a hip. The floor is of concrete slab construction. There are three turned wood posts.
6. Chimneys: There are three chimneys. All are of brick. One chimney is located at the center of the building near the rear wall. The others are at the north and south walls respectively, almost one third of the way back from the front of the house.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: For this double house there are two front entrances and two rear entrances. The entry doors are located at the center of the east facade, flanked with a window to the outside. The doors are recessed about 6". Both doors have a large glass panel, topped by a wood panel and over two wood panels. The doorways have a transom. The rear doors are no longer in place.
 - b. Windows: The windows are of double-hung, weighted, one-over one wood sash. The east facade has two windows, one for each unit. The north and south walls each have three windows, providing light to each of the three rooms. The west rear room formerly had two windows, now removed.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The building has a hip roof covered with wood shingles. The east front slope is extended to cover the porch. The ends of the porch roof turn to create a hip.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: The rafter ends (2" x 4") extend beyond the walls by about 1'; the sheathing is exposed.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: This building is a double house, having two simple shot-gun plans. Each unit is three rooms deep, probably having having the typical layout of living room, bedroom, and kitchen to the rear.
2. Floorings: Floors are of 3½ Douglas Fir set atop joists above a crawl space.
3. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are of plaster on adobe. Interior partitions are also of plaster on adobe and measure 1'-0". The ceilings are of wood lath and plaster in the front two rooms each side and are of 3½ T/G, v-groove boards. Ceilings are 9'-11" in height.

4. Openings: Doorways are surrounded with Greek Revival trim. Doors are wood with four panels.

Windows have similar trim.

5. Decorative features and trim: The Greek Revival trim has 5 3/4" flat board jamb boards with 5" head trim with a crown molding. The 9" baseboard has a quarter-round top and toe strip. There is a picture rail at 8'-3 1/4" above the floor. The wood ceilings in the kitchens have edgeboard trip.
6. Mechanical equipment: The building is without plumbing, electricity, or heating. The house has a kitchen, but no bathroom.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house is located on the west side of South Convent Avenue. It is set back from the street about 23', being at a slight angle to the street. There is a front yard of about 9' deep across the front of the house. Two sidewalks link up the street sidewalk with the porch. The porch is at grade level. The rear of the building has a large open yard defined by a wood and corrugated metal fence.
2. Landscape: There are two Chinaberry trees in the front yard. The rear yard is undeveloped.

Prepared by: Prof. Robert C. Giebner
Project Supervisor
Professor of Architecture
University of Arizona
July 1980

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Building Slip, Pima County Assessor's Office
Sanborn Fire Insurance Company maps, 1909, 1914, 1919, 1948.
Tract Books, Pioneer National Title Insurance Company.
Tucson City Directories, 1897-1979.

Oral Interviews:

Adelina García Flores, 56 W. Kennedy St.
Eliazer Herreras, 1331 E. Waverly.

Prepared by: Ann E. Huston
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Assistant Project Historian
Historic American Buildings Survey
September 1980

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service's National Architectural and Engineering Record (NAER) in cooperation with the Tucson Barrio Association, Inc. Funds for the project were provided by the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office and the Arizona State Office of Economic Planning and Development. Under the direction of Robert Kapsch, Chief of NAER, John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, and Kenneth L. Anderson, Principal Architect, the project was completed during the summer of 1980 at the HABS field office in Tucson, Arizona, by Robert C. Giebner, Project Supervisor (Professor of Architecture, University of Arizona); William Joseph Graham, Project Foreman (University of Maryland); Ann E. Huston, Project Historian (California State University, Sacramento); Maureen L. Gerhold, Assistant Historian (Pennsylvania State University); Student Architects Scott Marshall Dolph (University of Arizona); Carol Jean Lemon (Washington State University); and Harrison Adam Sutphin (Virginia Tech); and Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Summer Youth Employment Program Interns: Maria Arriola (Tucson High School); Ernest Cotta; Lupita Lopez (Tucson High School); and Anna Trinidad. Photographic records were made for HABS by David J. Kaminsky, Photographer, Roswell, New Mexico. Editing and final preparation of the documentation was carried out in 1981 in the HABS Washington Office by William Joseph Graham, Architect, and Lucy Pope Wheeler, Writer/Editor, of the HABS professional staff.

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